

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 02304 220920Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

EAE-00 /066 W

-----221243Z 036201 /23-12

O R 220900Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2787

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2304

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM PINT KS

SUBJ: REACTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS TO MYONGDONG DECISION

1. MOST HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS WERE NOT SURPRISED BY SUPREME COURT DECISION. MANY DOUBTED THAT ROKG WOULD USE COURTS TO RELEASE DEFENDANTS EVEN IF ROKG WERE SO INCLINED. MANY STILL FEEL AMNESTY FOR DEFENDANTS POSSIBLE WITH TIME FRAME VARYING FROM SEVERAL MONTHS TO "EVENTUALLY."

2. FOR ALL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS MYONGDONG CASE WAS SYMBOL OF MOVEMENT AND BECAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION IT ATTRACTED MAIN HOPE FOR PRESSURING ROKG TO RELAX PRESSURE ON LOCAL CRITICS. THOSE ACTIVISTS WHO VISUALIZE SLOW BUT STEADY EVOLUTION F DEMOCRACY IN KOREA SAD TO SEE MYONGDONG CASE DISAPPEAR AS ACTIVE ISSUE, BUT THEY REMAIN COMMITTED TO THEIR CAUSE AND ARE STILL HOPEFUL THAT PASSAGE OF SPRING TENSIONS AND RISING ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE WILL HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT IN KOREA. THEY ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT SUFFERING OF MYONGDONG AND OTHER PRISONERS AND HOPE THEY WILL BE RELEASED WHEN TENSIONS ABATE. IN SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP THEY HAVE NOT VOUNTEERED SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW U.S. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 02304 220920Z

SHOULD REACT.

3. A SMALLER NUMBER OF ACTIVISTS, THOSE WHO SEEK URGENT DEMOCRATIC REFORM, ARE IN DESPAIR OVER POSSIBILITY THAT MYONGDONG CASE WILL FADE BEFORE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. THEY ARE NOT SURE ANOTHER VEHICLE FOR ATTRACTING WORLD ATTENTION SO EFFECTIVELY CAN BE FOUND, BECAUSE ROKG,

HAVING LEARNED ITS LESSON, LIKELY TO FIND MORE SUBTLE MEANS
OF DEALING WITH CHALLENGES. THESE ACTIVISTS, IN DIRECT
OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN (SEPTTEL), HOPE U.S.
GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE STRNG STAND IN REACTION TO COURT
RULING, EVEN IF THIS RESULTS IN A PERIOD OF GREATER
ROK REPRESSSION AND INTERNATIONAL TENSION. THEY
BEIEVE MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS AND ALL OTHER POLITICAL
PRISONERS ARE WILLING TO REMAIN IN PRISON AND BEAR
WHATEVER CONSEQUENCES MAY COME IN ORDER PRMOTE DEMOCRACY.
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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